

Voluntary catch limits work well

SCOTTISH fishermen have in the last month exploded the fallacy that voluntary catch limitations to conserve resources are unworkable, says the Scottish Fishermen's Organisation.

The SFO represents 700 vessels with an annual catch worth about £80m and its members catch 80 per cent of the haddock landed in the United Kingdom.

Jimmy Lovie, chairman and chief executive of the organisation, said on Tuesday: "The British Government has failed to institute a workable plan to limit landings of haddock. They claim that voluntary restrictions would not be acceptable to fishermen."

"We brought in our own scheme on March 20 by which no boat could land more than 30 cwt of haddock per week per crew member."

"This was generally

accepted by our fishermen as the most sensible way of conserving the stocks for the rest of the year. "As a result, many of them are fishing only three or four days a week, but they still regard it as being in their future interests. They have already reduced the overall catch level by 10 per cent compared with what would otherwise have been caught. "In the long term, however, this type of arrangement can only work permanently if it is properly enforced by the authorities on all fishermen."

"We therefore, propose, to suggest to the EEC in Brussels that the voluntary limitations should be considered as a basis for the management of fish stocks generally."

which included her 'ration' of about 500 kits of codstuffs, 500 plus of reds and a nice spread of haddocks, plus some colley to round the trip off. Northern Reword, after 23 days off the coast, landed 1,332 kits with haddocks, closely followed by codstuffs and reds the main species. With the weather again making fishing a near impossibility on the middle days to the Norway coast, water grounds, catches and grossings were all down. Best effort came from BUT's Ross Jaguar (Skipper Denis Speck), who got among the haddocks in a landing of 747 kits which sold for £19,491 after 16 days. The former BUT distant water trawler Ross Kelly (Skipper Pat Phillipson) landed the most fish in a section with 806 kits from a 15-day trip, but over half this was 'blunks' and she had to settle for £17,972.

SLACK FISHING HITS TRIPS

LAST WEEK was another bad one for landings at Grimsby and the shortage of fish which marred the pre-Easter week sales was once more a feature of trading. Landings fell to around 16,000 kits for the four-day week and, although fish was still very pricey at the morning auctions (North Sea cod again topped £50), there were no spectacular grossings. This is because of the slack

TOW FOR RESCUER

WHILE answering a distress call from the Aberdeen port trawler *Arnisdale*, grounded off Orkney last Friday, the Grimsby trawler *Boston Kestrel* smashed her rudder stock on the sea bed. *Boston Kestrel*, outward bound off the Western Isles, was light. She was towed into Kirkwall, Orkney, to await a lift back to Grimsby. *Arnisdale* was later successfully refloated.

THE BANFF fishing vessel *Surveillance* ran on to rocks near Armadale, Skye, this week.

The boat's crew of five came ashore by raft and her skipper, Willie Watt, was hoping to patch up the vessel before the next high tide. The 48-ton craft is thought to be fairly badly damaged.

Sample boat ready

A NEW 37 FT. research and collection vessel for marine biologists to obtain specimens from the shore waters of the Clyde estuary will go into service within the next few weeks.

The vessel, R.V. *Exodus*, was designed by G.L. Wilson. Her hull, deck and wheelhouse were moulded by the Tyler Boat Co. (GRP) by the Firth of Forth.

After trials in the Firth of Forth, *Exodus* will be delivered to the University Marine Biological Station at Millport, on the Isle of Cumbrae, Firth of Clyde. Although the station's work is mainly academic, one of its duties is to monitor the effects of sewage and industrial effluents on fish and other marine life in the Clyde.

Aberdeen Marine has fitted out the vessel as a standard single-engine MFV powered by a 110-hp (Marine) diesel engine. A stern transom is being installed.

Warning is final

THE SOUTH coast's part time fishermen are being warned strongly to avoid landing undersized fish. The warning is being made in the form of a public notice in the local press which all fishermen that are members of the Sussex Fisheries District Association must read. The notice is being issued immediately. The committee's notice has been to issue a warning, followed by written warnings, before any other action.

However, the system generally thought to have failed to the stage where it became a farce. The tougher measures mainly aimed at protecting the fishery from the EEC's plans to allow fishing up to the beaches.

This time the big guns of the British Fishing Federation are trained on Westminster and a meeting was held in Edinburgh last Friday with inland fishing representatives to work out plans for an industry-wide demonstration as the revision of the Common Fisheries Policy comes into a crucial stage next month.

The federation has poured out of money in the past into local newspaper advertising campaigns. Now the plan is that a stronger line could be taken. With support from the inland fleet, it is understood that moves are being made which could result in sending a fleet of trawlers to London around the middle of next month.

HAKE £114 A NATIONWIDE shortage of hake is creating record-breaking prices. Last Friday, a 10-stone kit reached £114 at Fleetwood — beating the month-old record of £113. The fish was from the John N. Ward and Son Ltd. merchant, Bert Crack, of Southway Fisheries, who wanted the hake for a London customer. Crack said that the fish was of very good quality and its price was determined by the law of supply and demand.

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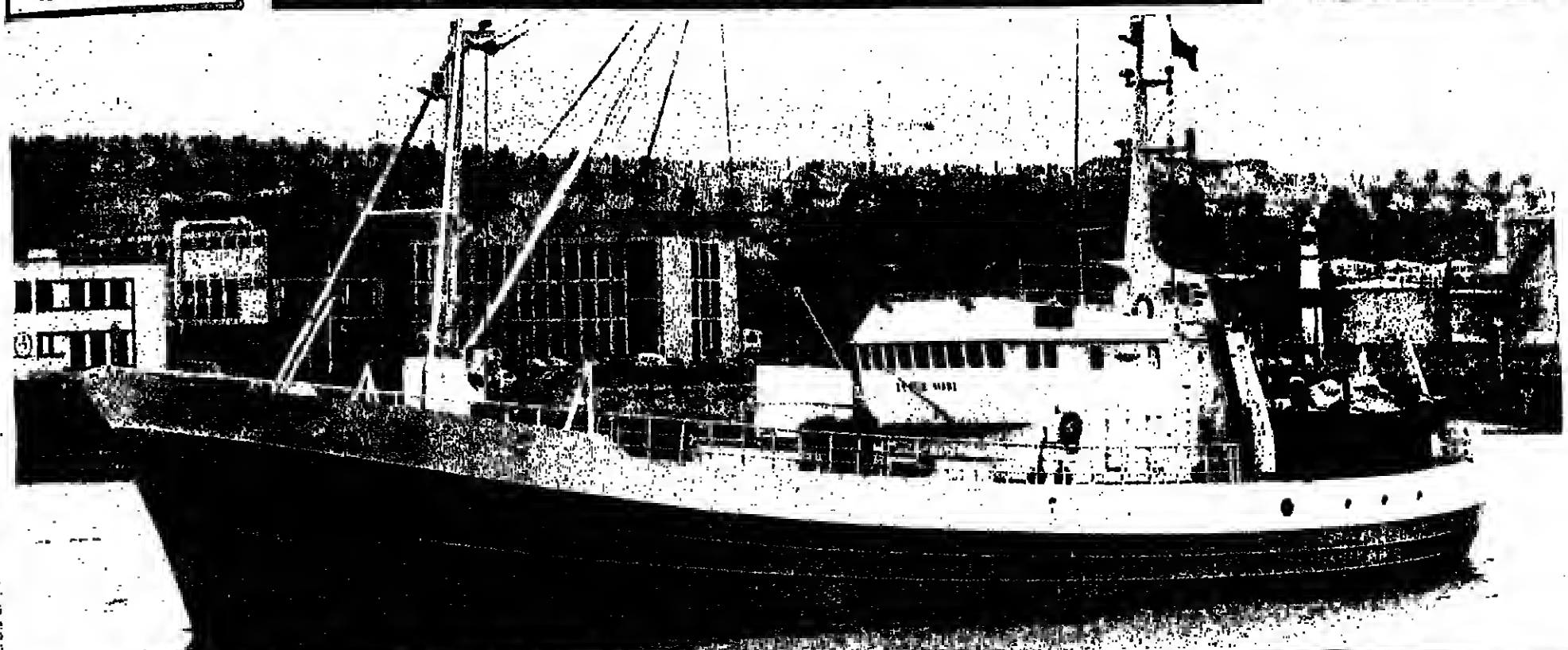
fishing news

April 20, 1977

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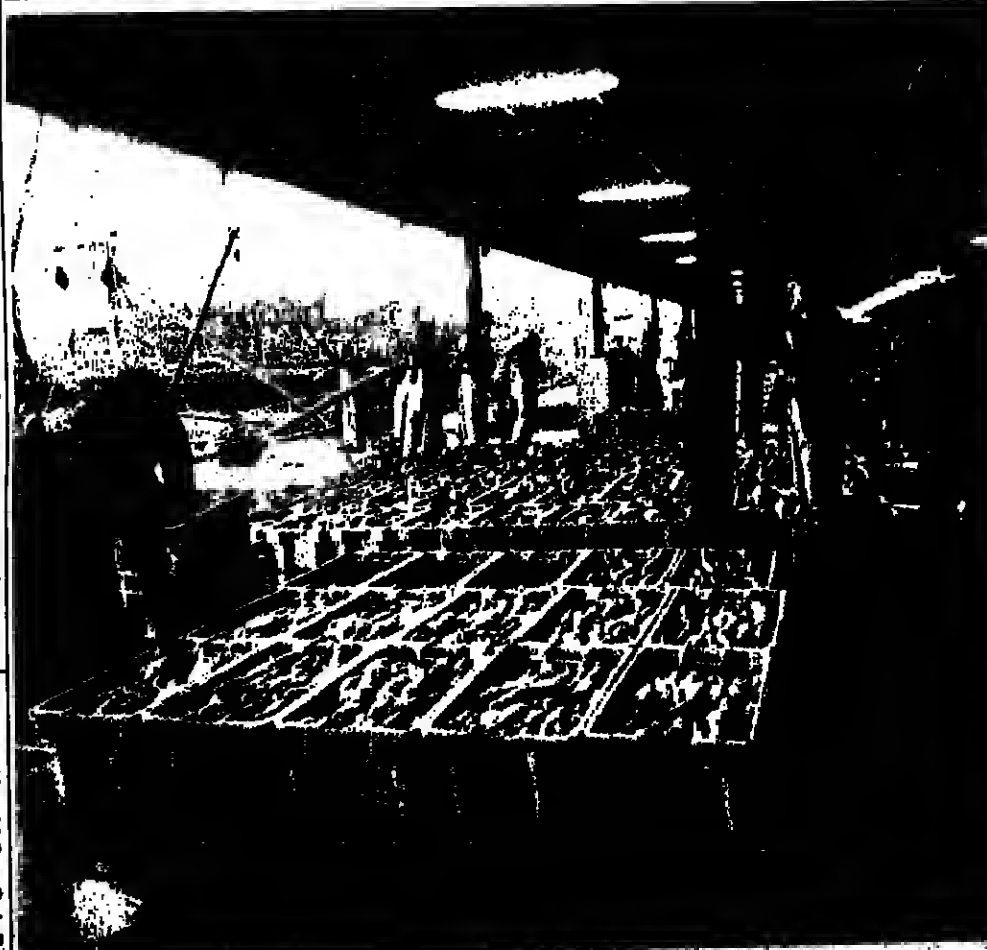
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LIMIT DEMO MAY HIT LONDON

She's here!
SEE PAGE THREE



Shell is catching

Shell marine oils are as much a part of the sea as these fish. Britain's top trawlermen rely on Shell to help them bring home a consistently fine catch. And once in port, they look to Shell again for the on-the-spot servicing today's trawlermen need. At Grimsby, Lowestoft, Fleetwood,

Hull and Aberdeen, Shell are the main bulk oil suppliers. Elsewhere, they're ready at the dockside of every major fishing port. Even while you're at sea, Shell technology is on call. Extensive research facilities are there to help you. With so much at stake, it pays to pick Shell.



SHELL MARINE LUBRICANTS

FROM last Friday the new IALA buoyage system will begin to be implemented around the British coast. It will be progressively developed throughout European waters from then on in accordance with published Notices to Mariners.

In the past some countries have used the principle of the Lateral system, whereby certain marks show port and starboard sides of the channel in accordance with some agreed directions.

Others have used Cardinal marks in which dangers are shown by one or more buoys laid out in the quadrants of the compass to indicate where the danger lies in relation to the mark.

The latter system has been rather useful in the open sea where the Lateral system direction of buoyage may not have been very obvious.

Confusion

It is clearly necessary that sailors instantly recognise a buoy or light looming out of the fog or darkness with the minimum of hesitation: the much-publicised case of Texaco Corrib which was hit by *Brandenburg*, and subsequently the *Niki*, showed that there, hed for years been much confusion over lighting systems.

The new system should do much to remove this confusion, although it is a pity that it will still exist side-by-side with the system proposed for North America but not yet finalised.

The new System 'A' will use both Lateral and Cardinal marks, but a seaman can instantly tell which he is looking at. Lateral marks utilise red or green colour by day and night

to indicate Port or Starboard sides of channels in the sense of the new 'conventional direction of buoyage'.

This simplification has been made possible by not using green for marking wrecks in future, but using it instead for starboard land marks. This principle will seem very logical to seamen as it will correspond to their vessel's side lights.

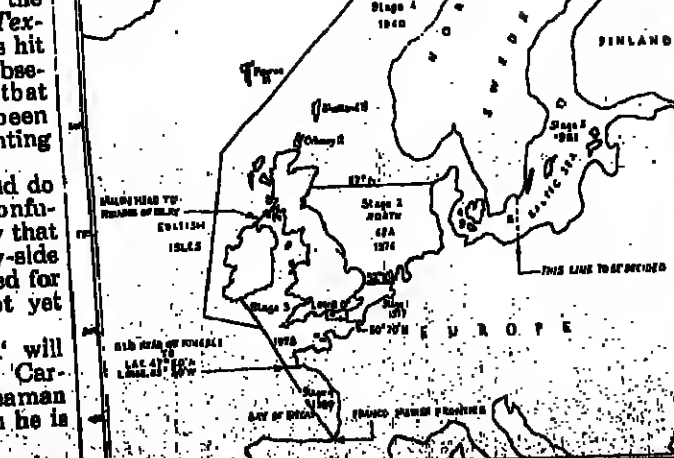
Cane and cones will now be logically painted green and red and will have similarly coloured flashing lights. Cardinal marks will have very distinctive topmarks and will be identified by very quick, or quick flashing, white lights which relate to the numerals on a clock face and are easy to remember.

There are two other marks which come into the picture — one is the isolated danger mark which has navigable water all round it and the other is a safe water mark, which is also safe to sail around but does not indicate a danger. This could be used in mid-channel for example.

The actual changeover started from Harwich on Sunday and will proceed as closely as possible to plan, although Trinity House points out that buoys may not always be changed exactly on time owing to bad weather or other problems.

Charts are also being altered, but the Hydrographer's office says that the first areas have already been accounted for and all is proceeding according to plan.

Target area of the IALA buoyage system 1977-1980.



There is a new chart which shows the location of oil North Sea oil and gas fields in the various national areas and this should be of some considerable help to fishermen wishing to avoid complications with pipelines, for example.

During July new anti-collision regulations come into force and new candidates for certificates of nautical proficiency are already being examined on them. It will, however, be necessary for seamen already at sea to examine them with care as they bring in several important aspects.

Perhaps most important is the provision for much earlier action by those who see danger approaching and, formerly, were obliged to stand on and hope for the best.

One point made by the new DoT handbook is that ships in traffic lanes often consider that they have priority over crossing ships, but this is not so unless there are special rules.

It is advised that crossing of such lanes be carried out at right angles — and for very good reason. Recent research has shown that this is the least risky course of action as most collisions occur in fine crossing or meeting situations.

New lighting criteria are specified under Rule 22 and Annexes 1 and 11 of the new regulations but, as the changeover time in some cases is as long as nine years, it may be as well for fishermen to assume that the changes are not as yet binding. There will be 'new lighting requirements' for small vessels.

There are several requirements related specifically to fishing vessels, many of which will not be new to fishing skippers. Under Rule 9 a vessel engaged in fishing shall not impede the passage of any other vessel navigating within a narrow channel or fairway.

Rule 10 makes the same provision with regard to traffic lanes, but Rule 18 says that a power-driven vessel underway shall keep out of the way of a vessel engaged in fishing.

Trawling

There are also, of course, specific lighting requirements which are almost impossible to mistake for other authorised combinations and which take account of vessels engaged in trawling, shooting and hauling nets, pair trawling and so on.

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FINE TO LOW-B

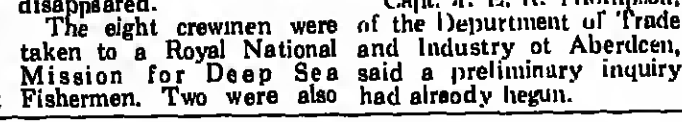
THE BRITISH Fishing Federation has imposed a £250 fine on a French skipper for using an unauthorised fishing gear. A spokesman for the Federation said that the skipper, who was caught at Lewisham, had used a net which was not allowed under the rules. The Federation has poured out of money in the past into local newspaper advertising campaigns. Now the plan is that a stronger line could be taken. With support from the inland fleet, it is understood that moves are being made which could result in sending a fleet of trawlers to London around the middle of next month.

Japan co 156

MAN LOST AS SCOTS TRAWLERS COLLIDE

section — cod landings from the distant waters have seldom been lower than those of last week. Skippers are facing sl

There was an acute shortage of cod from the middle of 1942 to the middle of 1943. The shortage was due to a combination of factors, including more than 750 boats being lost.



At the Fishermen's Mission he said he was in the wheelhouse when the collision occurred and he had to wear a waist-deep in water to get

Mr. Love went on to say that the IFPEA had stated publicly, and to the government, that it is essential for the future development of the

According to the Scottish Fishermen's Organisation.

urging ministers to give immediate consideration to setting up a catch limitation scheme for all North Sea

A scheme had been in voluntary operation among SFU members during the past month and has proved bot

They were willing to recommend to members that fie

Agriculture and Fisheries, said the slowness of progress on the 50-mile exclusive zone was not satisfactory.

"It is now recognised within the Community that action is urgently needed and we are awaiting a new Commission initiative on the long-term fisheries regime".

section — cod landings from the die-tant waters have seldom been lower than those of last week.

— Skippers are facing sickness

There was an acute shortage of cod from the middle-

She was followed by similar Westerly trips, all around 16-17 days, from *Rose* *Pnather* (Skipper Wally Stokes), with a big telly of

down the North Sea. Bu-
Sleigh's *Margit* (Skipper Chris Jensen) made 2,590 from just 66 kits, mostly codstuffs, after 18 days.

"We had to make a decision and were all in the water," he said. "I never thought I'd get out there," he said.

Management of our fish resources also meant that attention has to be given to the problem of pollution which is becoming very serious.

On haddock fishing in the North Sea, Mr. Lovie stated that a total of 25,000 metric tons had been landed at UK ports during the first quarter.

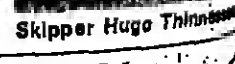
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strong tide running end, when he got back on deck, he noticed that the tide had taken him within the limit.

"He immediately altered course and it was while he



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Shrimp hunt to start

FISHERMEN at Soa-houses, Northumberland, are looking to shrimps to provide a new boost for their industry particularly in the wake of a ban on herring fishing.

Last year a brief shrimp season gave an indication of the potential. As a result, several fishermen have invested in new equipment to catch shrimps. Buying arrangements are being finalised.

WHITBY Town Council is writing to Scarborough Borough Council protesting at the appearance at the harbour of what it terms unsightly pens erected for fishermen's gear.

SIR, This association has during the past 12 months been trying to negotiate reasonable application and compliance of the 1975 Safety Rules with the Department of Trade.

The words reasonable and compliance are carefully chosen because they are the words that the department uses most.

We are totally sick of hearing Mr. Clinton Davis, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Shipping, preach to the industry "We will be reasonable" while, in essence, his surveys in the field convey the message: "You will comply."

We are also sick of reading in *Hansard* of Members of Parliament putting down questions and being fobbed off with answers which are so inaccurate that they are an embarrassment to his own department.

I refer in particular to a written answer given by Mr. Clinton Davis to Mr. Rathbone on November 17, 1976. He twice refers to sheltered waters — a term his own department cannot define and

Fight the ruinous DoT safety rules

LETTERS

will not recognise.

He refers to exemption being given to vessels engaged in boom fishing from the need to establish stability by an inclining test, when an investigation

his own department says that the vessels concerned were not boom fishers at all. Had Mr. Davis's replies been correct, there would not be the degree of animosity being directed at him now.

We are sick of losing time and see to travel to Whitehall to be told very politely to "get lost". This association has, to date, had four meetings with the Department of Trade. At the last meeting, which was

chaired by Captain Hampton, of the Smooth Water Limits Committee, our chairman and I were informed that while they had every sympathy with our request for extension of portability smooth water limits, this could not be met, because it affected yachts and coasting vessels. What the hell have they to do with fishing?

A Mr. Tope led us to believe that we could reasonably expect favourable consideration to relieve us of the cost of the need to establish stability criteria, namely £1,000. Several weeks later, in best department language, he wrote to me and said: "sorry old boy, we cannot do it". Who got at you Mr Tope?

One may ask the question: why is it that the government is at this very moment

'negotiating' Phase Three of the pay policy with the all-powerful trade unions and virtually asking them how the law will be framed, while at the same time it is imposing crippling legislation on the British inshore fishing industry in a truly

SPEAK UP ON SEAL MENACE

SIR Why do we never hear the views of the people in authority regarding the grey seal menace?

Every belliff, fisheries officer, MAFF and WFA official that I have ever spoken to on the subject all agree the problem has reached ridiculous proportions.

I have never read of a water authority or angling club clamouring for seals' blood. They seem only to be obsessed

dictatorial fashion. The answer is that we are fragmented and lack unity in fight off this type of problem.

To all inshore fishermen, say: write to your Member of Parliament asking him to protest on your behalf, and him convey to Parliament the main public opinion to suspend and modify these rules.

This could help put a stop to the ruthless, ruinous, exploitation of these Rules.

KEN GREEN, Sec. Thames Estuary Fishermen's Association, Wivenhoe.

So come along gentlemen. Give us a bit of advice and sport.

S. STEVENSON, South Harbour, Blyth, Northumberland.

THIRD FIN ON DEVON SKIPPER

DENNIS KIMBLE, skipper of the Brixham trawler *Lady Iris*, was fined at 'Farley Magistrates' Court on Monday last week for the third time for contravening a Devon Sea Fisheries Committee by-law.

He pleaded guilty to trawling in the Gilt, 7 1/2 miles within the three-mile limit. The by-law prohibits fishing inside that zone by vessels over 60ft.

The magistrates imposed a £100 penalty and ordered Skipper Kimble to pay £40 costs.

The court was told by Michael Brabin, prosecuting, that on January 6 the fisheries patrol boat *Miriam Ford* was near Hope's Nose, Torquay, when the officers aboard saw *Lady Iris* within a mile of the shore.

After one of the officers spoke to the skipper, the gear was hauled in and several fish were seen in the nets.

Ian Duncan, for the defence, said Skipper Kimble was testing a new sprat net. It

Lady Iris — just 7 1/2 miles inside the Devon sea mile limit.

was the opinion of a Brixham trawlerman that the netting was not the usual trawling, but he was unwilling that as a defence.

Mr. Duncan said, recently *Lady Iris* had been out of commission for weeks for work to be done on the new DOF regulations, which had cost the owners £2,000.

To make that up he had to be at sea as soon as possible. That morning he had landed at 8 a.m. and would be out again in a few hours' sleep.

A charge against the owners, Target Trawling of Plymouth, was also

Trammel men cash in on 'gorging' cod

A SWITCH to trammel net fishing has given some north-east cod fishermen their best winter season for many years.

The crews who kept to line fishing, the traditional winter method, found fishing disastrous and stopped work earlier than usual.

Hartlepool boats have been working trammels and one crew set seven nets which caught 230 stones, mainly cod, in one day.

According to the latest report for the North Eastern Sea Fisheries District, for the quarter ending March 31, the reason for the catches is thought to be that the cod are gorging themselves on sprats, which have come close inshore, rather than on the line men's mussel bait.

At Hartlepool six boats worked trammels and cod landings were very excep-

tional. Each of the boats had well over 100-stone daily.

Cod landings were again good at Sunderland, according to the report. Nine boats worked trammel or gill nets there.

At Scarborough, poor line fishing ended the season in just two weeks. Seven cods and four small craft worked trammels and had "a fairly good quarter's work".

It seems that a number of other cods will switch over to trammel netting instead of living in future, attracted by cod prices averaging from £3.20 to £4.50 per stone.

However, the success of the trammel netting cods has attracted the attention of keel

boat skippers who have now decided to order their own fixed nets.

The codmen feel that these larger boats should be banned from the three-mile limit.

With the winter sprats coming close inshore, the area's fishery officers were hard-pressed to protect the small boats' fixed gear from the larger trawlers.

One warning letter was sent during the quarter and 32 offences are under review. The chief fishery officer, Mr. H. F. Theaker, is asking the committee to "urgently consider the means of giving protection to the small boatmen's gear".

NEW WFA AREA OFFICER

THE White Fish Authority has appointed John Muir as Aberdeen area officer in succession to the late Mr. I. J. H. Mackay.

Mr. Muir joined the authority in 1970 as work study officer having previously held similar posts in industry.

As work study officer with the authority his activities have included various projects concerned with developing improved methods of fish processing, and design work in relation to factory and other layouts.

He has also been involved in the authority's development work into the processing of blue whiting.

Mr. Muir, married with one daughter, takes up his duties in Aberdeen on May 16 and will move to Stonehaven shortly afterwards. As well as representing the authority in Aberdeen, he will also be concerned with Orkney, Shetland and the coastal area south from Aberdeen to the Tyne.

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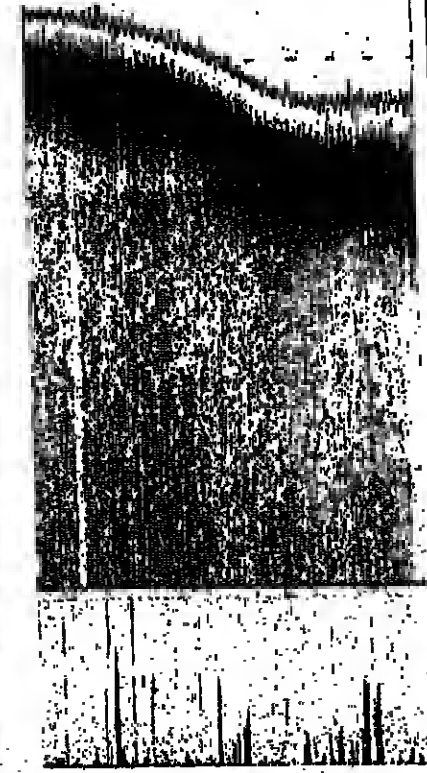
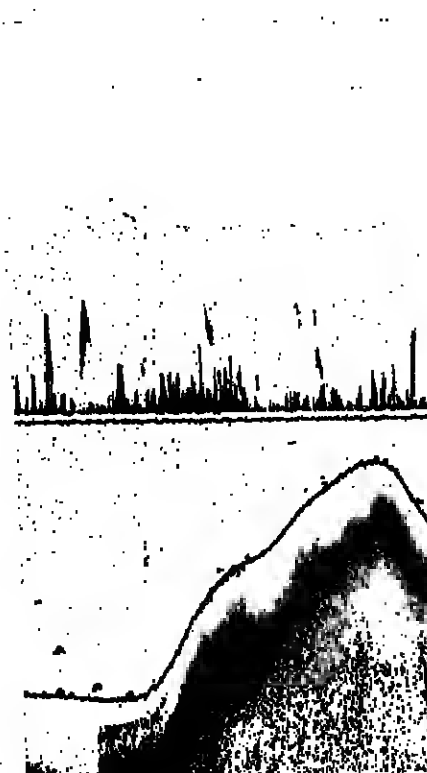
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People



THE appointment of Thomas Loughran (above) as managing director has been announced by Trident Engineering Ltd., a company within the Trident Marine Group of Donagh. He was previously chief engineer with Irish Shipping Ltd.

Trident Engineering has been formed to handle the mechanical and hydraulic installation and servicing of all marine equipment agencies held by the parent company.

WILLIAM J. Allen, assistant manager at the net and twine factory of Cosalt Ltd., Grimsby, for the past six years, has been appointed production director at the Cosalt subsidiary of W. & J. Knox Ltd., Kilbirnie, Scotland.

He will now be responsible for manufacture of the extensive range of synthetic twines, twines and nets at W. & J. Knox.

FERRO-CEMENT expert Owen MacAllister has left the Hampshire boatbuilders MacAllister Carvall Ltd. to start his own company aiding the World Ferro-cement projects.

Partner Les Carvall has taken over the running of MacAllister-Carvall at New Milton and he now plans to build ferro-cement hulls and other boats for service at another

THE GRIMSBY trawler *William Wilberforce*, laid up by the Boston Group on April 18 for an indefinite period following a poor showing from an onet Greenland trip, has had an unexpected early reprieve.

Last Friday she was heading down the Humber bound for the Bear Island grounds.

The decision to put the 698-tonner back to sea so soon was, however, largely because the company was able to pass on part of its very restricted north-east Arctic cod quotas in a general reshuffle of its wet fish fleets at Fleetwood and Grimsby.

Boston Keatrel, which ran aground off the Orkneys, is expected to be out of fishing and under repair for several weeks. *Prince Philip* is in the

middle of a three-week refit and *Boston Boring* has also been laid up because she is due for a major Lloyd's survey.

With *Boston Comanche* — in trawler at Grimsby only three years ago — also laid up after her 24-day trip to the White Seas and Norway coast last Friday, to have left *William Wilberforce* tied to the well would have meant the 11-strong Boston fleet at Grimsby having only *Voleus*, *Belgium*, *Boston Phantom* and *Boston Halifax* operational.

Nevertheless, *William Wilberforce* (skipper Billy Ball) is still subjected to a very restricted cod catch and the trip's success will depend largely upon what other fish she can catch.



Boston Boring — due for a major survey.

fishing news

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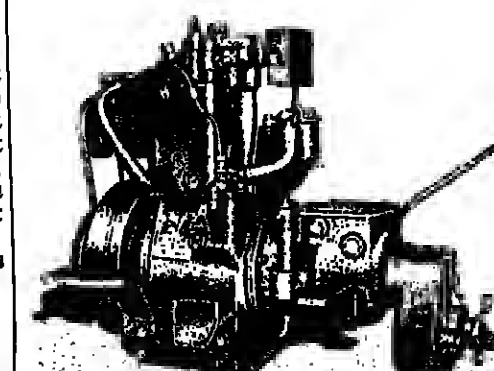
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Net firm lays on trawl tests for skippers

TESTS of scaled-down nets at the White Fish Authority's new fisheries training centre at Hull have shown fishermen a wide range of possible adjustments and modifications to gear to improve catches and earnings.

The centre, which has the world's largest experimental flume tank, opened in February last year and the Grimsby-based firm of Cosalt Ltd., with its international reputation for nets and gear of all sizes, is taking full advantage of the facilities.

Already, Cosalt, which contributed towards the project, is producing a whole series of improvements in net manufacture and rigging, based on successful model tests in the tank's simulated conditions.

Recently (*Fishing News*, April 22) the firm arranged for another 30-strong trip of management executives and skippers, mostly from the Grimsby area, to visit the flume tank where the Cosalt inshore net department put its Gemini pair trawl and Concord box trawl through a strenuous demonstration programme.

The party was made up by a contingent of owners from abroad, plus two top Scottish skippers who had set off from Peterhead immediately after landing and driven through most of the night to Hull with a representative from Cosalt Fisheries Ltd.

As with all flume tank work — in which actual sea conditions are simulated by using a variable water flow, suction screens, deflectors, cascade bends, wave traps and flow-attracting screens — the scaling-down of fishing rigs is a very exact art which creates a number of mathematical problems.

For the heat results the main aim is to produce the largest possible models, but this is limited by the tank's size and Cosalt's net consultant, Clive Redcliffe from the Department of Maritime Studies at Grimsby College of Technology, had done a first-rate job with a one-tenth scale pair trawl and a one-eighth Concord trawl.

First to be demonstrated



Scottish skippers Arthur Buchan (left) and Walter Milne (right), with Vic Bruce of Cosalt Fisheries, Peterhead, after their visit to the flume tank at Hull. Above right: Cosalt pair trawl in the flume tank showing the rigging on the headrop and bobbin gear on the groundline. Right: Concord box trawl in the tank. Below: Skipper Peter Thinnesen of the Grimsby pair trawler *Tino* making a headline reading on the pair trawl.



for the party was the demerit pair trawl with its scaled-down 117 ft. 4-inch headline and 130 ft. fishing line. This is the net of the wing trawl type which has been used so successfully lately by both English and Scottish pair trawlers.

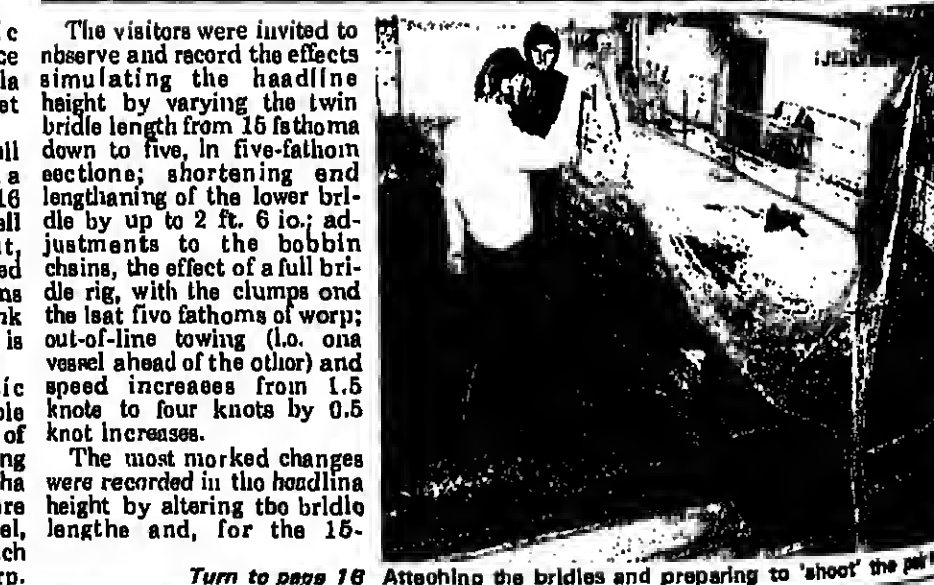
It is specifically designed to have an easily adjustable bobbin rig, which affects the position of the ground gear in relation to the fishing line. It can also be arranged with an adjustable chain section on the lower bridle so that this may be lengthened or shortened in relation to the upper one.

A major modelling problem found with this gear was prediction of the net spread. Eventually, this was worked

out from geometric calculations of the distance between the towing vessels and the warp bridle and net length.

The figures lead to a full size net spread of 62 ft., and a bridle angle of around 16 deg., which compared well with similar crawls but, scaled-down, still presented more modelling problems because the maximum tank spread at the towing points is only 14 ft.

To simulate realistic parameters it proved possible only to use 20 fathoms of model bridle from the wing ends to the towing points. The original calculations were based on the pair trawl level, one quarter knot apart, each working 400 fathoms of warp.



Turn to page 18 Attaching the bridles and preparing to 'shoot' the pair

LAST "chat" I heard landings of were made in the Channel during 1976.

marketing situation and several new beds were found during which resulted in

the Shellfish at Burnham-on-Crouch, in answer to my question, a spokesman there said that although the scallop has been heavily poached in many parts of the available scallop has been located and

beds of scallops are to be off the Isle of and off Newlyn, and we expect good for some time to

is good oews. two, Brixham and are the main ports and scallops have useful standby when catches were low.

Some fishermen in the south and south-west specialise in scallops, many just as part of a mixed fishery. could switch to white scallop trawling according to the abundance of flatfish and the prices.

does not help the who needs a steady of scallops to prepare export market; in fact, the British scallop is exported to the States where there is a market.

scallops there has been a boom in southern the main fishery for is to Scottish scallops are caught in the west of Kintyre (Jura, Gigha, Islay) the Shetlands. In fishing takes place over the year, being at least from February to at from September to

know that scallops are long-lived? They can reach an age of ten years old. The rings on can be used to work out the age of the shellfish — representing ooe rings are formed and ceases during and the shell is similar to the are formed in the

scallops in my shop selling at 20p is money to be

lobster pots traditionally the have always used well type pot for and lobsters. were by these were willow ("withy") the headrop, but through the shape of changed little,

As a result of investigations by Professor Meek of Cullercoats Laboratory in Northumbria during 1895-1904, most of the local Sea Fisheries Committees in England and Wales introduced bye-laws in the early 1900s making it an offence to land egg-bearing female lobsters. This legislation did not apply to Scotland.

An inter-departmental

facility, and very low power assumption. Alternative 50 kHz, 200 kHz transducers are available for wooden and fibreglass vessels, and a 50 kHz transducer for steel vessels.

Depmar 103 and 131 echo sounders are available now from Kelvin Hughes. Write or phone for full details.

shell fish chat

modern materials which are more durable are used.

In the 1950s and 1960s the pots were made of a wire framework, bound by chestnut hoops. This framework was covered with netting; the entrance or "oock" was made of basketwork and the pot's base of "weldmesh".

Pots of this type were made by fishermen for their own use and few were offered for sale.

Today the situation has changed again. Although pots of wire and netting are still in use, they are being replaced by welded tubular polythene frame pots — or "plastic pots" as they are usually called in Devon.

These pots, originally designed and produced by Mr. Nantas of Weymouth, are more usually sold as frames to which the fisherman attach the netting.

The cost of the frame is about 25 and, although the price of these frames appears expensive, they last longer than wire. Also there is considerable saving in a fisherman's time.

The other important factor is that, because of their durability, damage is reduced and so the time spent repairing gear is minimal. The other main difference is that the basketwork necks have now largely been replaced by ready-made plastic or glass-fibre necks. The pots are well worth a try.

Protecting "berried" lobsters?

Some fishermen along the north-east coast of England are pressing for the introduction of legislation to protect egg-bearing lobsters. I asked a contact of mine, who is well versed in fisheries legislation, to brief me on this important subject.

It may surprise you to learn that it was not until 1951 that berried females were protected by national legislation which applied to the whole of the UK.

As a result of investigations by Professor Meek of Cullercoats Laboratory in Northumbria during 1895-1904, most of the local Sea Fisheries Committees in England and Wales introduced bye-laws in the early 1900s making it an offence to land egg-bearing female lobsters. This legislation did not apply to Scotland.

An inter-departmental

Committee on Crabs and Lobsters was set up in the early 1920s to consider if further protection was required to conserve the lobster and crab stocks. The committee reported in 1926 and did not recommend the introduction of any protection for berried lobsters. Professor Meek, who was a member of the committee, disassociated himself from the recommendation and resigned.

Based on a later government study, legislation to protect berried lobsters was introduced covering the whole of the UK as the Sea Fish (Crabs and Lobsters) Order 1951. Fishermen in many parts of the country, especially Scotland, protested at this move although men along the north-east coast, who had accepted the ban for years, were pleased.

In 1966 the government scrapped the 1951 Order and replaced it with legislation which did not include protection of the berried lobster. In the UK, therefore, female lobsters have only been protected on a national basis for 11 years.

Whenever lobster catches fall, some men suggest that the re-introduction of this ban would conserve the stocks. There is some doubt about this thinking.

Studies for over 60 years in Canadian waters have shown that little is gained by protecting berried females. For the first five weeks after hatching from the egg the lobster larvae are free-swimming — and it is at this stage that the greatest mortality occurs.

In 1913 the French also accepted the view that it was too difficult to enforce legislation to protect these females and they repealed their laws. The main problem, I am told, is that it is impossible to detect a "scrubbed" lobster.

For many years fishermen in some areas have removed the eggs from berried females by simply brushing with a scrubbing brush (hence the term "scrubbed lobster") and so evading the legislation.

Afterwards the swimmerets and underside of the lobster are slightly bruised — but a few days in a keep-pot will soon repair the damage to the lobster and not even the most hawk-eyed fishery officer could accuse anyone that it had once been a "berried" lobster.

I believe our fisheries people felt that, since it was virtually impossible to enforce the Order and that the protection of berried females was of questionable value — and certainly not the best means of conservation — it was best to revoke the Order and this was done in 1966.

I believe the current feeling is that lobster conservation can best be achieved by means of increased legal size limits and the use of the carapace length measurement. TRAPPER.

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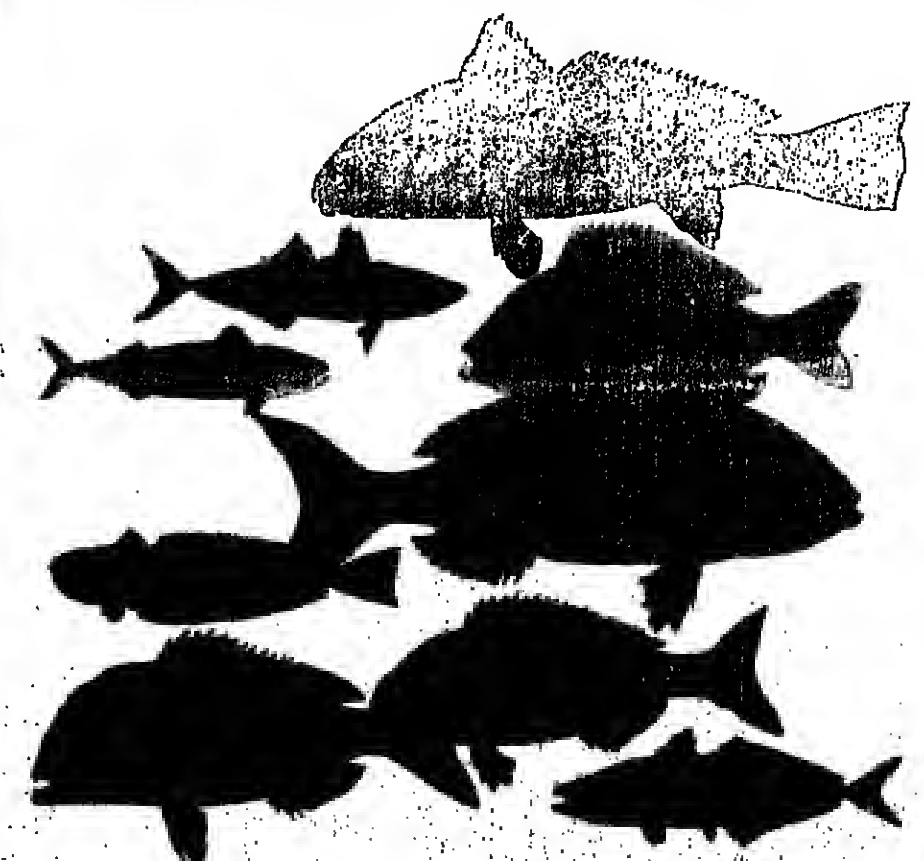
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facility, and very low power assumption. Alternative 50 kHz, 200 kHz transducers are available for wooden and fibreglass vessels, and a 50 kHz transducer for steel vessels.

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